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Training Tips: Live Instruction or Distance Learning?

Which is best?

Everyone wants to know the best way to learn. Should you take a live course of instruction or should you just study on your own? There are benefits and drawbacks to both. The key to determining what works best for you is understanding the benefits and drawbacks to each.

There is a lot of great information to be learned and there are many great teachers, presenters, and writers. Live education is preferred by many people. Many people choose live education because they want to be taught the information and don't want to read it. This should not be the sole reason for choosing live education. Live education can and should be a great supplement to first reading the information whenever possible. If reading or learning information from a distance is not possible prior to the live instruction workshop or course, then the information must be read or reviewed afterward. Live education is great and everyone can benefit from it. Everyone should take every opportunity to learn in a hands-on format because there are certain techniques and methods which can be better understood or learned in person. Live training is a great way to be introduced to a new concept to understand the basics, or to make more advanced connections with information that you already understand to a certain degree, but are missing some important differentiations.

The beauty of distance learning is that ongoing learning comes from reading continuously, making use of audio learning, and watching videos which you can return to again and again to refresh your memory or gain the little information connections that put all the sciences and application techniques together.

So what is the answer? You are not going to like it. You should do both. You absolutely must read all that you can and obtain a strong research base and understanding of the basic sciences (anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, exercise physiology, and biomechanics), but you must also understand how to apply this information (program design, exercise application, and business processes). The trainer who says that they learn best by "doing" is not unusual. Everyone learns best by doing. But by only doing, and not researching, you will make a lot of mistakes that are likely to either hurt or hinder you or your clients. We have seen a lot of students attend workshops, without performing distance learning, go out and try to apply concepts that look cool, but that they do not understand. The results are then either minimal or disastrous and the trainer is left wondering why.

Understanding what form of learning you most enjoy is important. But don't go trying to convince

ANYONE that you learn best by doing so you don't read or that you learn best on your own so that you don't try to learn from other experts in a hands-on format. Take every opportunity to take advantage of both. Every trainer or fitness professional should take a hands-on course and review the accompanying manual or presentation notes. Textbooks, manuals and other forms of distance learning were not meant to be read cover to cover and memorized. They are meant as ongoing references and resources. You can choose the route that does not include both, but you may give your clients lacking information and guidance. No training methodology or form is the best, we must learn from many experts and many sources. Make sure you read at least 30 minutes per day and attend a live workshop or college course at least once every six months.

If you have the will, you will find the time and the funding to make it happen. You expect your clients to "break their bank" to train with you. Shouldn't you do everything you can to make sure that you are worth it?

NESTA provides live learning opportunities in AZ, CA, IL, IN, NY, AND WA (FL, OR and TX coming soon) (<http://www.nestacertified.com/live-seminar-for-personal-training.html>), and multiple venues for distance learning (<http://www.nestacertified.com/nesta-programs.html>) for you. If you're not sure where to begin, please email us at cs@nestacertified.com.

In The Fitness Industry: Fight the Good Fight

It seems everywhere we turn, there is a new study out on the importance of regular exercise and how it can lessen existing conditions or prevent future problems. In recent postings on IHRSA's website, the headlines speak for themselves, "Exercise May Reduce Premature Birth," "20 Minutes of Brisk Activity Reduces Depression," "Aerobic Exercise Keeps Us Young," "A Month of Exercise Helps Ease Heart Failure," just to name a few.

IHRSA, along with many health and fitness professionals will be meeting May 21 and 22 in Washington DC for the 6th Annual IHRSA Legislative summit. The main focus of the summit will be giving support for The Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Bill. This bill helps people pay for fitness programs and exercise equipment by using pre-tax health investment accounts such as health savings accounts and medical savings accounts. IHRSA describes this as "a positive step towards covering the costs of preventative measures." The second point of focus will be The Workforce Health Improvement Program (WHIP) Act. This act allows an easy route for employers to deduct the cost of health club memberships for their employees without involvement of the IRS. This will help employees of all companies, no matter how large or small, lead healthier lifestyles.

Clearly, the importance of incorporating exercise into one's lifestyle cannot and should not be ignored. It is our job as fitness professionals; to offer solutions for a healthier lifestyle to all those who wish to attain optimal health. Get the word out to the community, spread knowledge of the benefits of exercise to all and help inspire others to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

Business Tips: Where do you get your training and research information?

By John Spencer Ellis, MBA, EdD

The message for certified professionals and students this month is simple. Read more. Textbooks are good, but they are only one source. Your experience (also known as anecdotal information) is also important, but it is also only one source. The experience of your peers is helpful, but is also anecdotal experience unless they are citing journal references when they talk to you (which can be a little frightening). Research journals should also be a source of information. We must use all of these sources without becoming dependent on any one source.

The most important information to help your training is found in the scientific research. Yes, I know that means you are going to have to read some research journals. It is not necessary that you understand all of the statistical information in a study, but that you understand what is being analyzed, and that you become familiar with the results to be able to understand if it is really proving what the research sets out to prove. I realize that this is not the most appealing concept to many, but by the time you read concepts in a textbook, the information has been deciphered by the researcher, the reviewer of the research, and then edited as part of a textbook's foundational science. Some studies

don't actually prove what many say they do. Some studies actually only show that there is a possibility that something is true or may lead to a given result. However, there is also a lot of very good research available. The more studies you read, the easier it will become to dissect the important studies and information from the rest. Dedicate at least an hour per week to go to a university library with a kinesiology or physical therapy program to be able to access the journals which provide the information you hear or read the "experts" bringing to you (no cost). The only way to know if the experts are truly teaching you the "right" information is to occasionally read the original research AND make sure you truly understand the basic sciences. Otherwise, you will always be bombarded with conflicting facts and be forced to choose who is telling you the "truth". Don't fall into this trap. Perform your own research from peers, textbooks, industry experts, and research journals (a little every day). In the short run, this takes a lot of time. In the long run, you will be a more knowledgeable and proficient trainer who is likely to help a larger number of people and become one of the big earners.

But don't forget to read magazines as well. That's right, read those newsstand muscle magazines and fitness publications. There is actually a lot of good information to be found. There is also a lot of very questionable and scary information being promoted with little basis other than anecdotal experience or a writer taking the word of one or more "experts" (who also make decisions based on anecdotal information). You are not reading the magazines to learn how to train; you are reading magazines because that is what your clients read. This is the quickest way to understand how the public thinks and why all the gym goers do what they do. They do what the bodybuilding and fitness experts tell them from magazine articles. Do your homework. Become an expert and do your best to understand the research and basic sciences. Then read magazine articles to understand trends. Do this and you will not be steered wrong or waste your time with "trendy" or "new" workouts or exercise programs. You will know better and others will ask you for their information.

You will be able to create your own original, individualized workouts, and YOU will be the "expert" to those around you.

Training Connections: Building Business Relationships and Resources

The National Exercise & Sports Trainers Association is looking for a few good trainers! We want to highlight some of our members and their success stories. To be featured in upcoming issues of our newsletter (and possibly on our website) please submit your success story and a short bio in 500 words or less, and include a digital image (professional please, no workout photos) of yourself to: dave@nestacertified.com by May 31, 2008.



NESTA has partnered exclusively with Fitness and Wellness Insurance Agency, a recognized leader in the fitness industry, providing specialized insurance programs (or products) to personal instructors, commercial health clubs and day spas. Fitness and Wellness Insurance is a member of the Philadelphia Insurance Companies (A+ admitted carrier) one of the largest insurance writers of the fitness, professional sports, and recreation industry. Philadelphia Insurance Company insures many fitness opportunities, NBA Sports Teams, MLB Sports Teams, YMCA's and Boy's Clubs to name a few specialties.

Their mission is to support and enable fitness professionals and facilities to give their best service. Their policies provide peace of mind to fitness professionals and facilities in the course of performing their services.

Fitness and Wellness Insurance is pleased to provide a highly competitive insurance program for NESTA members and associates.

Highlights of their programs include:

- Highly specialized in insuring the fitness industry
- Applications & Quotes available online 24/7
- Highly competitive rates
- A+ (superior) admitted carrier
- Coverage available in all states except LA

To apply, please visit: <http://fitnessandwellness.com/NewIndividualTest.aspx?Association=Nesta>



The National Exercise & Sports Trainers Association (NESTA) and Spencer Institute have teamed up to offer certified fitness professionals and health and wellness coaches Top of the Line websites designed to take your business to the next level! Work with the best in custom and optimized website for the health and fitness industry. Visit: <http://www.lynnvandyke.com/websites-for-health-industry.html> TODAY!



Great-Trainers.com: GreatTrainers.com is a national fitness directory providing personal trainers with feature-rich, lead-generating listings. More and more prospective clients are using the Internet to find trainers and fitness centers. Nearly three hundred thousand individuals search each month for a personal trainer! GreatTrainers.com combines their radio and [television campaign](#) with their top placement on Google to get their members the most visibility of any directory service. NESTA certified trainers are eligible for a special promotion. Trainers receive a 20% discount on any of the listing options offered by GreatTrainers.com (enter discount code *nesta* on the billing page). Visit: www.greattrainers.com today!



NESTA would like to announce an exciting partnership for all NESTA trainers. Recently we have paired up with BOOMj.com, a social network and shopping website that targets baby boomers and adults over the age of 35. As you know this is the target who takes the most action on opportunities for fitness and wellness...and stress management solutions. BOOMj is one of the fastest growing social networks on the web; serving more than 78 million Baby Boomers. It has also been recognized for its large amount of traffic on Alexa.com and is now ranked in the top 10,000 websites out of 6 million. In addition, BOOMj.com was just ranked one of the top 10 web destinations for Baby Boomers by PC Magazine.

Our new relationship with BOOMj.com will allow all NESTA trainers to connect with BOOMj.com's database of members. By joining BOOMj as a friend of NESTA all of us will be able to interact with one another, exchange ideas, and create profitable relationships.

Plus when you build your personal profiles that highlight individual areas of expertise and knowledge, you will be able to build out your client base and income through new clients, and sell specific nutrition/fitness services. We hope that each trainer will take advantage of this unique opportunity to reach a highly sought after market and expand your business.

You can create your customizable fitness profile by visiting www.boomj.com and clicking on "Sign-Up" . At the bottom of the page will be an empty box titled "Refer/ Org"; type in NESTA and you will receive 3000 membership reward points that are cash towards purchases in the BOOMj store.... Hope to see you there!

Live Training – NESTA PFT and Continuing Education Workshops



The NESTA live workshop schedule in the coming months can be found below. If you do not see a workshop scheduled in your area any time soon, please contact us. NESTA currently provides live learning opportunities in AZ, CA, IL, IN, NY, AND WA (FL, OR and TX coming soon). In most cases, in order to hold a NESTA workshop there must be at least 30 attendees or the workshop may be postponed to a later date or alternate location. We realize that live hands-on training is perhaps the most useful form of training for any professional. Please be sure to sign up early as workshops often sell out. Let us know how we can be of greater service to you.

Would you like to attend a live training to improve your knowledge, skills and abilities? ([View the workshop calendar here](#))

Job Openings for Trainers, Coaches and Instructors

If you are NESTA certified or have a NESTA specialization and are looking for a job or position in your local area, start here. Your dream job may be closer than you think!

www.nestacertified.com/jobs.html



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